

GEO 2200 Physical Geography Syllabus

Instructor:

Michael Dobbins

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Office hours: Online and in person office hours available via appointment.

1 Course Overview

This is a study of some of the basic elements of the physical world in which climates, meteorology, and landforms are examined in terms of their natural occurrences, distribution and interrelationships. The class meets the General Education requirements of a Physical Science.

IMPORTANT NOTES

1. Make sure you have a WIRED Internet connection with approved browser by Canvas. See [Recommended Browsers](#) FAQs.
2. The midterm and final exams will be proctored through an online proctoring service, [ProctorU](#). This requires a high speed internet connection, a webcam, and a microphone. Please review the ProctorU [technical requirements](#). More information on the proctoring is also available on pages #5 of the syllabus.
3. Contact UF Computing Help Desk (352-392-4357) immediately when you encounter difficulties and keep the TICKET NUMBER for future reference and for reporting to the instructor.
4. Please read through the e-Learning [FAQs](#) and [best test practices](#).
5. Self-discipline is very important to this course. Make sure you follow the suggested Topic Dates. Reviewing the lecture videos is the first resource for all course material. DO NOT let queries accumulate until the tests. Much of this material is cumulative; therefore, a lack of understanding of early material will hinder your ability to comprehend material that follows. For questions about the lectures, please ask fellow classmates first (via the discussion board) and if you need further assistance, feel free to email me through canvas.

2 Course Objectives

The textbook and supplemental course lectures (videos) will assist you in successfully accomplishing each of the objectives below:

- To understand the nature of solar energy reaching the surface of the Earth, and its temporal and global variability.
- To understand how the interactions of oceans, continents, and atmosphere transfer energy from places experiencing excess energy to those of deficit energy, and how these give rise to the typical climate of a location.
- To understand the nature and origin of energy arriving at the surface of the Earth from within the planet, the mechanisms of this energy transfer, and their global distribution.
- To understand the processes by which the competing forces of energy derived from the climate system and those from within the Earth interact to produce typical landscapes.
- To indicate the ways in which all of the above impinge upon human behavior and our interaction with our environment.

3 Instructor

Michael Dobbins (michaeldobbins@ufl.edu)

Michael is a doctoral student in Geography with a M.S. in Geography, a B.S. in Biology, and a B.A. in Zoological Management. His research focuses on tropical wildlife ecology and conservation, predominately working with medium and large sized mammals in Belize. His dissertation is investigating the effects that humans have on terrestrial mammal biodiversity and abundance in southern Belize. Hobbies include hiking, biking, and wildlife photography.

Lecturer (pre-recorded videos)

Dr. Peter R. Waylen

Dr. Waylen holds an undergraduate degree in Geography from The London School of Economics in England, a Ph.D., from McMaster University in Canada, and has taught Introductory Physical Geography for over 25 years at the University of Florida. His research interests lie in the large scale interactions of global oceans and atmosphere, such as El Niño, in controlling the variability and extremes in climates and hydrology (floods, droughts etc.). As a geographer, he is especially interested in the impact that these phenomena have upon humans and their livelihoods, and the impacts that human activities may have upon the natural world.

GEO 2200 Physical Geography Syllabus

4 Office Hours

I will hold office hours during which he will be available to answer questions via email, Canvas Conference, or in person at the scheduled rooms in Turlington. Canvas Conference is a tool of your Canvas class, found as a tab on the left side of the course website, with chatting and file sharing features. See the top of the first page for times and locations. There is also a discussion page open to students to post questions all day. This can be found on the Discussion tab, and is called the “Physical Geography Lounge”. The instructor or other students will be able to post answers or have a discussion about the course.

5 Emailing

I will try my best to answer e-mail questions promptly (by the next school day ~24 hours). If you do not receive a response by the next school day, please follow up with me because we may not have received the e-mail for various reasons. I typically do not check emails on weekends.

Also: **I cannot respond to large quantities of e-mail in the 24 hours preceding an assignment/examination deadline.** Contact me early so that questions do not accumulate!

6 Texts

There is a *required* textbook for this class (options discussed below):

<p><i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (1st edition). Stephen Reynolds, Robert V. Rohli, Julia Johnson, Peter Waylen, Mark Andrew Francek. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2014.</p>

There will also be McGraw-Hill Connect, which will be *optional*. This will provide an electronic version of the book to read, as well as their system for self-testing on the material. *Either the physical book or the ebook will work for this course.*

The UF bookstore may have multiple versions of the textbook: 1) Just the Connect key for their SmartBook (online textbook with optional self testing), 2) Hardcopy textbook. If you buy the textbook from other sources and want to use the McGraw-Hill Connect, you will need to buy a Connect key when you first register (there is a fee for this).

7 Lecture Video Supplements

In addition to the textbook, there will be optional video lectures on some similar material. With these videos, we have put together a package of relevant course materials (tables, diagrams, maps) which are available in e-version in two formats: Microsoft Powerpoint and PDF versions that are downloadable from the course website. This pack includes slides from a much larger selection of videos, so only some of the slides are relevant. They do not follow along perfectly

GEO 2200 Physical Geography Syllabus

with the supplemental videos. The videos and accompanying files are meant to supplement the textbook. The main source of information for this class is the textbook.

Evaluations and Grading:

Assessment Item	Number of Assignments	Points per Assignment	Total Points	Percent
Syllabus Quiz	1	20	20	4
Homework	4	40	160	32
Missions	2	30	60	12
Group Assignment	1	60	60	12
Part I Exam	1	100	100	20
Part II Exam	1	100	100	20
<i>Total</i>			<i>500</i>	<i>100</i>

SYLLABUS QUIZ

At the start of the course, you will need to pass a syllabus quiz. This quiz may be taken multiple times until you score 100%, and there is no time limit within the quiz. It is open syllabus. **You must take this quiz to continue with the rest of the course.**

HOMEWORKS (4)

Each of the homeworks will consist of videos, tutorials, and other materials, as well as a series of questions to evaluate knowledge. Students have 7 days during which the homework will be available. During this 7 day period, you will have unlimited time to complete it. During your breaks you are welcome to review your notes, textbook, lecture videos or outside sources before returning to the homework.

MISSIONS (2)

Missions are task oriented assignments to be completed throughout the course of the semester. Due dates for each of the missions will be throughout the semester, however feel free to submit them early. You may pick topics that will be covered later in class, though I recommend that you review those lectures and/or book sections before writing up your mission. Each student is expected to accrue 60 points, at 30 points per mission (i.e. 2 missions total during the semester). Each mission will be comprised of a) proof of the completed task and b) a 500 word report detailing what the task was and what physical geography process or phenomena was described utilizing the appropriate terminology and explanations used in class.

For example, if you were to make an emergency preparedness brochure about earthquakes, submitting a copy of your brochure would count as proof of completing the task. You would need to submit the 500 word report describing your brochure and including something about

GEO 2200 Physical Geography Syllabus

earthquakes. This write-up is expected to demonstrate your *scientific knowledge and understanding* of the material/topic.

You may choose from the following missions (repeats are accepted, except where noted below):

1. A photograph of a physical geography event or feature related to climate
2. A photograph of a physical geography event or feature related to Earth's surface
3. A photograph or proof of attending a museum exhibit that relates to physical geography
4. A photograph or proof of constructing a physical model depicting physical geography
5. A digital model of a climate process discussed in lecture (use picture or video editing software to construct your model)
6. A digital model of a physical process discussed in lecture (use picture or video editing software to construct your model)
7. An emergency preparedness brochure (or some other print media) that is related to physical geography (e.g. hurricane, earthquake, volcano, etc.)
8. A newspaper article related to any part of physical geography covered in lecture (NOTE: you are only allowed to pick a newspaper article ONCE during the semester)
9. Propose your own mission (approval from the instructors is *required* before you proceed with your mission)

If your mission involves an uncommon file type, please check with me well in advance to ensure I'm able to view it.

GROUP ASSIGNMENT (1)

Shortly after drop/add, the remaining students will be divided into small groups (3-5 students per group). The group will self-select each of the following roles for the students:

1. Group leader – it is the responsibility of this person to contact all other group members and organize meetings
2. Energizer – it is the responsibility of this person to keep the group on task
3. Goal setter – it is the responsibility of this person to set goals for each group meeting
4. Group recorder – it is the responsibility of this person to collect the slides at the end and organize them into a cohesive order. This person will also be responsible for submitting the final product to the TA
5. Critic – it is the responsibility of this person to create a slide or two that highlights the weaknesses of the proposed solution created by the group

A series of short scenarios will be distributed to the various groups. The group will create a PowerPoint presentation detailing the problem presented in the scenario and how the group plans to solve the problem. All group members are expected to contribute to this project in addition to the extra assigned roles (group leader, critic). The Critic will create an additional

GEO 2200 Physical Geography Syllabus

slide that presents the limiting factors, challenges, and weaknesses of the proposed solution to the problem. The final product will be a single, cohesive set of slides with a logical order and flow, as well as a slide containing citations. There should be a cover slide that includes each group member's name and the additional role they played. The final product will be assembled and submitted by the group recorder to the assignment page on Canvas. Each student is required to put their initials at the bottom of each slide they produce or contributed to. If two people co-produce a slide, both sets of initials should be placed at the bottom of the slide. Each student will receive an individual grade. Negligent or unresponsive students who contribute little or nothing to the project will receive a lower grade and will not impact the individual grades of those students who do participate. This assignment will be due later in the semester to ensure plenty of time for the groups to organize and produce a quality presentation.

EXAMS (2)

Examinations are CLOSED-NOTE and will each consist of individual multiple choice questions.

- The exams will be proctored online using ProctorU (see next section).
- Two (2) hours are allocated for each test. You will be “timed out” after this. Having logged in to take the test once, you will not be permitted to re-enter the test site for that particular test.
- The two examinations will evaluate your knowledge of each of the two halves of the course, part I and part II, **separately**. The **second examination** will therefore only evaluate material presented in part II.
- *Be advised that, for all tests and examinations, you will only have until **midnight on the due date** to complete the questions. Please remember to sign-in with adequate time to complete each evaluation.*

PLEASE NOTE:

If you encounter any unexpected behavior (error messages, inability to login, etc.,) take a screen shot of the problem [In Windows, (Print Scrn) and on a Mac, (Cmd-Shift-4)] and paste into a program like Word or Paint. Save this file. This is important so that your instructor knows your problem is legitimate, and to assist the UF Computing Help Desk in helping you fix the problem.

If you encounter problems that prevent you from taking the exam, immediately call the **UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357**. Ask for and keep the ticket number for future reference.

Exam Proctoring Service (ProctorU)

For the two examinations, GEO 2200 will be using ProctorU for online proctoring services. This will be used by all students taking this course online, regardless of whether you are an on-campus student or not. You can access ProctorU at www.proctoru.com.

- Students are **REQUIRED** to have a **microphone** and **webcam** in place during the test-taking period.

GEO 2200 Physical Geography Syllabus

- Please bring a reflective surface such as a CD, DVD or mirror. This is so you can show the edges of your monitor to your proctor.
- Students will NOT be allowed to take an exam without a webcam.
- Students must register for a time slot for their course exams with ProctorU starting the second week of the semester, but no later than 3 business days prior to an exam.
- Exams can be administered any time of the day, seven days a week –exams will CLOSE at the posted time in the course – do NOT schedule an exam appointment with ProctorU that will take you past this time, even if they allow it, i.e. do NOT sign up for an appointment at 11:00PM on the last day of the exam because the exam will close at 11:59PM and your exam time will only be 59 minutes versus the time allotted in the course for the exam.
- Remember that if you schedule your exam during the late hours of the UF helpdesk (<http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/about/business-hours/>), they may not be able to assist you with E-Learning issues if technical difficulties arise. You may schedule for any time within the window, but be aware late-night exams will have reduce technical support available.
- No one is allowed in the room with you while you take your exam, so be sure to make proper arrangements.
- The proctor will ask you for **two forms of picture ID** and may ask some public record questions to identify yourself.
- Please plan on 1-hour in addition to the test taking time for interfacing with ProctorU.

Proctoring fees are prepaid as part of your tuition. For exams scheduled less than 3 business days (72 hours) before an exam, there will be additional fees.

8 Extra Credit

There will be one extra credit offering – a homework-like assignment near the end of the class. It can have questions from any topic in class (and may even go slightly beyond). The questions will be difficult, or cover key points from the course. The value will be ~5% of the total course grade, but it can fluctuate depending on the class average course grades at the time. Do *not* bank on the extra credit to save your grade.

9 Grading Scheme

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
100-95	94-90	89-87	86-83	82-80	79-75	74-70	69-67	66-63	62-60	59-57	<57

Note: Under University regulations a “C-“ *will not be a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule or College Basic Distribution credit.*

It is your responsibility to know how well you are doing in the class.

There will be a Grades tab in Canvas for following your progress. Please use it to keep track of your score, and contact me if there is a discrepancy. If you are not satisfied with the score you receive on an exam or quiz or feel an error has been made, you will be permitted **two weeks** from the time

GEO 2200 Physical Geography Syllabus

the score was posted for a review of the assessment (exception: Part II exam will have less than a week to review as it is near the end of term). After this time, the score will be entered as a permanent grade.

Please see the UF catalog grading policies for current guidelines not discussion here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

10 Late Policy

Semesters move quickly, and it is very easy to fall behind with video lectures. For assignments (homeworks/missions), I will accept them one day late with a 25% penalty. **Anything more than 24 hours late will not be accepted and a grade of “0” will be assigned.** No exams will be accepted late.

If you cannot complete an assignment or an exam because of an excused reason (illness, family emergency, etc.), please contact me as soon as possible. In order for the assignment to be excused, **official documentation** must be provided. Instructions on how to send the documents will be handled at the time I am informed of the incident. Note that all of the assessments are open for multiple days. The valid reason must cover all of these days.

If you know of an event in advance that will conflict with an assignment or test date, it is your responsibility to contact me beforehand and let me know. I prefer to know sooner rather than later. Not all conflicts will be excused (e.g. you want to miss an exam to attend a rock concert). It is the instructors' discretion to determine what is excused and what is not.

11 Academic Honesty

[Accountability to Academic Honesty](#)

You are all bound by the student academic honor code.

We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

In the Assessments, Canvas will shuffle the order of the questions and the order of the possible answers, generating a nearly unique assessment per student. **Plagiarism or cheating of any variety on any assignment will not be tolerated.** If a student is suspected of cheating and there is sufficient evidence in support of the allegation, the student will be reported to the appropriate student body, according to the University's Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution system.

11 Special Accommodations

GEO 2200 Physical Geography Syllabus

Students requesting disability-related academic accommodations must first register with the **Disability Resource Center**. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

- The Disability Resource Center will provide documentation to the student—each student requesting special accommodations must provide this documentation to the Instructor. I do not automatically receive this information, so the student is responsible with providing the DSO request to the Instructor.
- I will honor all requests. Please contact me to make appointment so that I can go through these accommodations and sign the form.

12 Student Support Services

As a student in a distance learning course or program you have access to the same student support services that on campus students have. For course content questions contact your instructor(s).

For any technical issues you encounter with your course please contact the UF computing Help Desk at 342-392-4357. For Help Desk hours visit: <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>.

For a list of additional student support services links and information please visit:

<http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-services>

In some special circumstances (when documentation is not available, for instance), I may ask you to contact the Dean of Students Office: **The Dean of Students Office**: 202 Peabody Hall, PO Box 114075, Phone: (352) 392-1261

The Dean of Students is a resource, available to all students, for when special circumstances arise that disrupts students' abilities to maintain their academic standing. I encourage students to use this resource if necessary.

Useful Links:

[Student Counseling by College](#)

[Student Right and Responsibilities](#)